

Res. 99, which was received from the House and is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BENNET). The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 99) authorizing the use of the Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for a ceremony to unveil the marker which acknowledges the role that slave labor played in the construction of the United States Capitol.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the preamble be agreed to, the concurrent resolution be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate, and that any statements relating to the measure be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 99) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

PROMOTING PERMANENT FAMILY CARE FOR CHILDREN

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 378, which was submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 378) expressing the sense of the Senate that children should have a safe, loving, nurturing, and permanent family and that it is the policy of the United States that family reunification, kinship care, or domestic and intercountry adoption promotes permanency and stability to a greater degree than long-term institutionalization and long-term, continually disrupted foster care.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I further ask that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate, and that any statements related to the resolution be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 378) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 378

Whereas the family is the basic unit of society and contributes to the emotional, financial, and material support essential for the healthy growth and development of children;

Whereas children without a family or connections to siblings and relatives or a permanent relationship with a caring adult are at risk of being homeless, growing up in substandard institutional care, and are vulnerable to sexual and labor exploitation and abuse;

Whereas research has shown that children who are abandoned, abused, or severely neglected can face significant risks that are costly to society, including lower individual lifetime earnings, poorer educational achievement, and higher consumption of health services, which in turn could lead to a greater risk of criminal activity and greater risk of incarceration;

Whereas there is scientific evidence that children deprived of a family, including connections with siblings, often experience trauma, which can have a detrimental impact on the development of a child;

Whereas some estimates show that there are approximately 18 million children in the world who have lost both parents and at least 2 million children in the world who are in institutional care;

Whereas there are approximately 408,000 children in the United States foster-care system and 107,000 of them are awaiting adoption;

Whereas within the current foster-care system, many children are overmedicated, housed in inadequate group homes, denied the ability to engage in age-appropriate activities, such as afterschool activities, and often denied access to their siblings or placement with a relative guardian due to insufficient efforts to locate family members;

Whereas thousands of children who "age out" of the foster-care system in the United States every year lack the security or support of a biological or adoptive family, connections with siblings and relatives, or a permanent relationship with a caring adult and struggle to secure affordable housing, health insurance, higher education, and adequate employment;

Whereas current governmental efforts to assist these highly vulnerable children in the United States and around the world do not include an effective strategy for securing a protective family, connections with siblings and relatives, or a permanent relationship with a caring adult for every child; and

Whereas while there have been several bipartisan laws enacted in the past several years that have made progress on a number of needed child-welfare reforms, much remains to be done to ensure that all children have a safe, loving, nurturing, and permanent family, regardless of age or special needs: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That—

(1) the Senate—

(A) affirms that all children in the world, including those with special needs, deserve a safe, loving, nurturing, and permanent family, connections with siblings and relatives, or a permanent relationship with a caring adult;

(B) acknowledges that the United States Government can and should do more by working with the private sector, nonprofit organizations, and faith-based communities to implement cost effective strategies that connect children living outside of family care with a permanent, supportive family, or connections with siblings and relatives, or a permanent relationship with a caring adult;

(C) encourages States, counties, cities, and to the extent appropriate, other governments to invest resources in family preservation, reunification services, services to help older youth transition out of care with a connection to siblings, relatives or a caring adult, kinship adoption, domestic adoption,

and intercountry adoption and post adoption strategies to ensure that more children in the United States are provided with safe, loving, and permanent family placements or a permanent relationship with a caring adult; and

(D) recognizes the United States Agency for International Development and the Department of State for recent efforts to develop a strategy for meeting the unique needs of children living outside of family care;

(2) it is the sense of the Senate that children should have a safe, loving, nurturing, and permanent family; and

(3) it is the policy of the United States that family reunification, kinship care, or domestic and intercountry adoption promotes permanency and stability to a greater degree than long-term institutionalization and long-term, continually disrupted foster care.

MEASURE READ THE 1ST TIME—S. 2111

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I understand S. 2111, introduced earlier today by Senator LEAHY, is at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the title of the bill for the first time.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2111) to enhance punishment for identity theft and other violations of data privacy and security.

Mr. MERKLEY. I now ask for its second reading and object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard. The bill will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2012

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate adjourn until 10 a.m., on Thursday, February 16, 2012; that following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following any leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business for 1 hour, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the majority controlling the first half and the Republicans controlling the final half; that following morning business, the Senate resume consideration of S. 1813, the surface transportation bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.